

APPENDIX B

NEIGHBORHOOD FOCUS AREA ANALYSIS

LONG BEACH HOUSING ACTION PLAN

Neighborhood Focus Area Analysis

**Washington School Focus Area
Central Focus Area
North Long Beach King School Focus Area**

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I. BACKGROUND

Over the 100+ years since the City's incorporation, Long Beach has grown to nearly half a million residents and over 170,000 housing units, rendering it the fifth largest City in the State. With this growth has come significant change in the City's population, including ethnicity, age, family structure and special needs populations, all of which have important implications for the community's housing needs. And while the residential real estate market is strong in many parts of Long Beach, most new private sector construction is not addressing the community's most pressing housing needs, and skips over the City's most impoverished neighborhoods entirely.

One of the most important demographic trends impacting housing needs is the City's transition from a majority white homeowner population comprised of smaller households to an increasing number of Hispanic and Asian renter households with large families. The City's existing housing stock of primarily older, small units are of inadequate size to house this population, resulting in significant unit overcrowding and deterioration. This population is predominately lower income, and is significantly impacted by escalating market rents, which have recently spread to even Long Beach's traditionally more affordable neighborhoods.

In addition to the mismatch between housing needs and supply, the City faces another critical housing issue related to housing deterioration in many low-income single and multi-family neighborhoods. The high degree of absentee ownership in many neighborhoods contributes both to unit deterioration, and overall neighborhood instability. And with more than one-third of the City's housing more than 50 years old, diligence in monitoring and maintenance of the housing stock is critical to preventing the proliferation of substandard conditions.

In summary, a high proportion of Long Beach's existing lower income renters and homeowners face extremely high housing costs relative to income, are overcrowded, endure unsafe housing conditions and live in unsafe neighborhoods. In order to address these priority housing issues, the Community Development Department has adopted the following five guiding principles in which to concentrate its resources and focus its efforts:

Housing resources will be used to address severe overcrowding in Long Beach neighborhoods.

Findings: One in five Long Beach renter households live in severely overcrowded conditions. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that over 60% of the existing rental housing stock consists of single or one-bedroom apartments and that the majority of the City's population growth is in large families.

Housing resources will be used to provide and preserve safe, decent and affordable housing for Long Beach households with the greatest need.

Findings: About 23% of city renters pay 50% to 60% and more of their income for even the smallest apartment. Each month, over 20,000 Long Beach families must choose between rent, food, medicine and clothes for their children.

Housing resources will be used to enhance neighborhood stability.

Findings: Absentee ownership, substandard conditions, a lack of affordable housing, insufficient code enforcement, and overcrowding have caused a severe deterioration and an instability and decline in the health of Long Beach neighborhoods.

Housing resources will be used to address substandard conditions.

Findings: Three-quarters of the City's housing stock is more than 30 years old, the age when buildings typically begin to show signs of deterioration and require reinvestment. Housing conditions are continuing to deteriorate in spite of the City's considerable code initiatives. Absentee ownership has contributed to substandard conditions of housing and destabilized Long Beach neighborhoods due to lack of maintenance or consistent maintenance.

Housing resources will be used to encourage owner occupancy.

Findings: With a homeownership rate of 41%, a minority of the City's households are homeowners. In Long Beach, absentee ownership of single-family homes and small apartment buildings appears to be a significant contributing factor to the decline of surrounding neighborhoods.

In order to most effectively direct its resources to address these five problem areas, the Housing Action Plan proposes spending at least 65% of the City's housing resources within designated Neighborhood Focus Areas in critical need of assistance. Three initial Neighborhood Focus Areas have been identified for investment. The following analysis describes current demographic, housing and neighborhood conditions in each of these areas designed to assist in understanding the nature and magnitude of need. Upon final selection of the Focus Neighborhoods, detailed Housing Action Plans will be developed to meet the unique needs of each area and address the City's five housing priorities.

II. NEIGHBORHOOD FOCUS AREAS

The Long Beach Department of Community Development, in conjunction with representatives from the City Council, Planning and Code Enforcement, have identified the following three Focus Area neighborhoods for initial investment under the Housing Action Plan (HAP):

- **Washington School Focus Area**
Anaheim Street – Pacific Coast Highway/Magnolia Avenue – Long Beach Blvd.
- **Central Focus Area**
Pacific Coast Highway – Willow Street/Pacific Avenue – Western boundary of Signal Hill
- **North Long Beach King School Focus Area**
Artesia Freeway – Greenleaf Blvd (North City limits)/ Delta Avenue - Long Beach Freeway

These three neighborhoods are in various stages of transition where concentrated public investment in housing and neighborhood improvements is essential to reverse their decline. After extensive review of neighborhood conditions throughout the City, these particular three neighborhoods were selected based on the following criteria:

- Severe renter overpayment
- Severe renter overcrowding
- High poverty levels
- High absentee ownership
- Concentrated building code violations
- High crime rates
- Geographic distribution
- Existence of other investment/programs

The following sections provide an overview of the demographic, household and housing stock characteristics in each Focus Area derived from the 2000 census, as summarized in Appendix A of the HAP. An analysis of the following neighborhood indicators for each Focus Area is also presented:

- Residential Real Estate Activity
- Market Rents
- Residential Development
- Code Enforcement Violations
- Police Activity
- Adequacy of Park Space

1. Washington School Focus Area

*Anaheim Street – Pacific Coast Highway/Magnolia Avenue –
Long Beach Blvd*

The Washington School Focus Area encompasses a population of approximately 9,200 residents, and 2,300 housing units. This area contains one of the highest concentrations of rental units in the City, with 93% of all occupied units utilized as rentals, compared to 59% Citywide. The housing stock is characterized primarily by small to medium sized apartment buildings (less than 20 units) built in the 1950s and 1960s with off-site property management. Over half the single-family homes in this area are renter-occupied.

Washington School neighborhood residents reflect a range of ethnicities: 77% Hispanic, 10% African American, 6% Asian, and 4% White, among others. With 42% of the population under 18 years of age (compared to 29% Citywide), this area is characterized by a large number of families with children. And while the apartments in this area are typified by small unit sizes, households average 4.1 persons per unit, contributing to significant unit overcrowding. In fact, 47% of the renter-occupied housing is considered severely overcrowded, compared to 20% severe renter overcrowding Citywide.

Residents in this neighborhood earn very low incomes, with a 1999 median household income of \$19,800 in contrast to a Citywide median of \$37,270. Over half (51%) of neighborhood residents earn incomes that fall below the poverty level, compared to 23% poverty level households Citywide. Low resident incomes combined with relatively high housing costs result in high levels of household overpayment. The 2000 census documents 57% of renters in this Focus Area overpay for housing costs (> 30% income on rent), with one-third of renters spending more than half their income on rents.

Residential Real Estate Activity

Review of residential sales in the Washington School Focus Area during calendar year 2003 reveals 48 completed sales: 9 single-family homes, 11 condominium units, 7 duplex/triples/fourplex buildings, and 7 apartment buildings. Table 1 summarizes sales activity during this period.

Table 1
Washington School Focus Area
Residential Sales Prices – 2003

Unit Type	# Units Sold	Price Range	Median Price	Median Unit Size	Median Year Built
Homebuyer Units					
Single-Family	11	\$180,000-\$299,000	\$239,000	1,206 sq.ft.	1920
Condominium	11	\$109,500-\$175,000	\$155,000	827 sq.ft.	1988
Unit Type	# Buildings Sold	Price Range per Unit	Median Price per Unit	Median Unit Size	Median Year Built
Investment Properties					
Duplex – Fourplex	19	\$70,000-\$230,000	\$115,000	---	1933
Apartments	7	\$61,000-\$93,000	\$79,000	---	1924

Source: Real Quest, January 2003 -December 2003

Single-Family Homes: Eleven single-family homes sold in this predominately multi-family neighborhood during 2003, ranging in price from \$180,000 to \$299,000 and selling for a median of \$239,000. As home prices continue to escalate, re-sale activity has been active, with two-thirds of these 11 units selling only two to three years prior and realizing over 50% appreciation in price. Many of these units were likely purchased by investors to utilize as rental property, as supported by census statistics, which document that 53% of the single-family homes in this Focus Area are occupied as rentals.

Single-family homes are modest in size, averaging 1,200 square feet, and comprised of predominately 2 and 3 bedroom units. All homes sold were over 70 years in age, with 1920 reflecting the median year built.

Condominiums: Eleven condominium units were sold in the Washington School Focus Area, ranging in value from \$109,000 to \$175,000, and commanding a median price of \$155,000. Units were all within one of four complexes located on Locust, Pine or Cedar Avenues and built between 1985-1990. Three of these 11 units had previously sold within the last two years, and realized price increases of between 50% to 100% upon resale.

Duplex/Triplex/Fourplex Buildings: In addition to homebuyer activity, the Washington School Focus Area is experiencing a high level of residential investor activity as investors are buying up duplex, triplex and fourplex properties prevalent in the area. A total of 19 such properties sold during 2003, including 12 fourplexes, 5 duplexes and 2 triplexes. The median purchase price was \$115,000 per unit, with over half of these properties having previously sold since 2000 and realizing significant price appreciation of 30% to 50% and above. The majority of these properties were built between 1920-1950, with a median year built of 1933.

Apartments: Seven apartment complexes sold in the Washington School Focus Area during 2003, commanding a median price of \$79,000 per unit. Apartment buildings were small, 4-6 unit complexes, and comprised entirely of studio and 1-bedroom apartments. Three of these seven complexes had previously sold in 2002, evidencing price increases of 40-50%. Exterior inspection of many of the recently sold apartment buildings evidence limited or no signs of physical upgrading such as painting. With extremely limited rental vacancies, property upgrades are not necessary to rent units in this neighborhood, contributing to deferred building maintenance. The apartments sold were all built between 1915 and 1929, with a median year built of 1924.

Market Rents

With 90% of the housing in the Washington School Focus Area occupied by renters, the rental market consists of a mix of apartments, condominiums, duplexes and single-family homes. Table 2 presents average market rents by unit type in the greater Downtown area (zip code 90813) as collected by the Long Beach Housing Authority. As of May 2004, market rents average \$912 for a 2-bedroom apartment, \$988 for a 2-bedroom condominium, \$660 for a 2-bedroom duplex, and \$1,030 for a 2-bedroom single-family home. Comparison with Housing Authority rents from January 2002 illustrate typical rent increases of 15% and above during the 2+ year period, with particularly high increases among duplexes and single-family homes.

Table 2
Washington School Focus Area (Zip Code 90813)
Rental Housing Rates: 2002-2004

Unit Type and Bedroom Size	<u>Jan 2002</u> Average Rent*	<u>May 2004</u> Average Rent*	Change
<i>Apartments</i>			
Studio	\$464	\$544	+17%
1	\$641	\$716	+12%
2	\$805	\$912	+13%
3	\$1,134	\$1,268	+12%
4	\$1,198	\$1,400	+17%
<i>Condominiums/Townhomes</i>			
1	\$545	\$545	--
2	\$928	\$988	+6%
<i>Duplex</i>			
2	\$660	\$660	--
3	\$850	\$1,249	+47%
<i>House</i>			
1	\$400	\$595	+49%
2	\$940	\$1,030	+10%
3	\$891	\$1,015	+14%
4	\$1,100	\$1,700	+55%

* Rents reflect average between 1-2 bathroom units

Source: Long Beach Housing Authority, Rent Surveys

Residential Development

The Washington School neighborhood has experienced limited development in recent years, with only six new units developed between 2002-2003. All these units were built in two-unit duplex structures. While the area's R-4 zoning provides for generous development densities to allow for recycling and intensification of underutilized properties, the area's small parcel sizes limit the development of larger multi-family projects without the consolidation of several parcels. Fortunately, the area falls within the Central Long Beach Redevelopment Project Area, providing opportunities for Redevelopment Agency assistance in site assembly.

The Long Beach Redevelopment Agency has developed a draft Strategic Guide for Development (March 2004) to define land use concepts and development strategies for the Central Redevelopment Project Area to facilitate the area's transformation. The Guide's "residential strategy" establishes the following goals and strategies:

Goals

- Increase the supply of housing stock
- Reduce overcrowding
- Preserve and upgrade existing neighborhoods
- Enrich the livability of the residential neighborhoods

Strategies

- Modify regulatory requirements to encourage residential development compatible with the neighborhoods
- Encourage moderate to high density residential development, which is compatible with the neighborhoods, along the arterials
- Encourage construction of larger residential units (with more bedrooms), more suitable to the average family size in the area
- Develop and enforce design guidelines that regulate appropriate siting and massing, relationship with adjacent structures, and quality

Consistent with these Strategic Plan goals, the City and The Long Beach Housing Development Company (LBHDC) are currently providing assistance for development of Pacific Apartments, a 42-unit affordable apartment complex to be developed at Pacific Avenue and 16th Street. The project is comprised of three and four bedroom units reserved for low- and very low-income large families, and will include a large recreation room, computer/study room, outdoor tot-lot, picnic area, and mini soccer field. Priority in tenant selection will be given to families in the neighborhood currently living in overcrowded conditions, including Cedar Avenue immediately to the west.

Code Enforcement Violations

The City estimates that about one-third of the housing in the Washington School neighborhood is in good physical condition, another third is in need of rehabilitation, and a final third is severely deteriorated and qualifies for code enforcement citations.¹ This neighborhood falls within the Washington School Neighborhood Improvement Strategy Area (NIS) where the City has conducted intensive code enforcement efforts over the past decade to improve overall neighborhood conditions. In 2003, the City stepped up code enforcement in the area with a sweep working from Magnolia Avenue east to Pacific Avenue. The City conducts monthly block clean-ups, and continues to fund a graffiti control program.

As of March 31, 2004, the City's Code Enforcement Division identified the following active cases in the Washington School neighborhood:

- Abandoned Vehicles - 7
- Property Maintenance – 10
- Substandard Buildings – 20
- Substandard Conditions – 34
- Weed Abatement – 20
- Zoning Enforcement - 9

Of the 414 residential parcels in this Focus Area, approximately 5% of the properties have current citations for substandard conditions, and 8% have citations for substandard building violations. Substandard building refers to severe code violations, which endanger the health and welfare of the occupants or public, and will result in City demolition of the structure if compliance is not achieved.

Numerous factors present in the Washington School Focus Area continue to contribute to code violations and inadequate building and property maintenance, including: the combination of extremely low vacancy rates and high level of absentee landlords; an aging housing stock; and high population densities and unit overcrowding placing additional wear and tear on the buildings and neighborhood.

Police Activity

The majority of the Washington School Focus Area falls within four police reporting districts. The LBPd handled an average 104 Part 1² crimes per

¹ City of Long Beach Tax Credit Application – Pacific Apartments, March 25, 2003.

² Part 1 crimes encompass crimes against persons and crimes against property. Crimes against persons include: murder, manslaughter, forced rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Crimes against property

reporting district in the Washington School neighborhood in 2003, compared to the Citywide average of 68 Part 1 crimes per district.³ While Part 1 crime increased by only 2% in this area between 2002-2003 (from 417 to 429 incidents), Part 2 crimes increased by 13% from 409 to 469 incidents. In contrast, Citywide Part 1 and Part 2 crimes each declined by 4% during this same period.

The most prevalent Part 1 crimes in the Washington School neighborhood are: auto theft (23%), aggravated assault (22%), robbery (14%), and petty theft (12%). Crime levels are exacerbated by overcrowded living conditions, as well as a number of active gangs in the area.

Adequacy of Park Space

As part of the Long Beach 2002 Open Space and Recreation Element, the City prepared a map of existing park service areas, and residential neighborhoods currently underserved by park facilities.⁴ The map illustrates that the entire Washington School Focus Area falls outside the service area for any existing neighborhood, community or regional park. With high population densities and over 40% of the population under age 18, significant household overcrowding and a lack of on-site open space in most existing residential development, the Washington School Focus Area is significantly impacted by insufficient open space resources.

In recognition of these issues, several park and school projects are planned for the Washington School neighborhood, which will bring needed resources to the area and aid in neighborhood stabilization. The City's Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine has recently rebuilt 14th Street Park in the center of the neighborhood, converting it from a passive area with grass and trees to an active recreational area with playground, skate plaza and basketball court. In addition, the City has acquired a 2.4 acre site on Chestnut Avenue from the County of Los Angeles, and has submitted a grant to the State to purchase 0.35 acre of adjacent properties for the creation of "Seaside Park." The Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) is evaluating several sites in the Washington School neighborhood for development of a new elementary school, including potential development of a joint school/park where designated play areas will function as a public park in the evenings and on weekends.

include: residential, commercial and automobile burglary, grand and petty theft, auto and bike theft, and arson.

³ In 2003, Long Beach Police documented 18,613 Part 1 crimes Citywide. With 271 reporting districts, this translates to an average of 68 Part 1 crimes per reporting district.

⁴ The City has adopted the following service area standards: ¼ mile radius for neighborhood parks, and ½ mile radius for community and regional parks.

2. Central Focus Area

Pacific Coast Highway – Willow Street/Pacific Avenue – Western boundary of Signal Hill

The Central Area is geographically the largest of the three Focus Areas, and encompasses a population of 18,700 and housing stock of 5,100 units. Three-quarters of the occupied housing in this area is used as rentals. With two-thirds of the housing comprised of multi-family, primarily apartment units and an average household size of 4.0 persons, household overcrowding is a significant issue: 54% of renter households are overcrowded, and 36% are severely overcrowded. Population densities in the area west of Long Beach Boulevard are among the highest in the City.

The predominant ethnic groups are: Hispanic (53%), African American (20%), and Asian (19%). The Area contains a significant number of families with children, with 41% of the population under 18 years of age. The majority of households earn very low incomes, with 39% of the population earning incomes below the poverty level.

The Central Area housing stock is quite old and deteriorating. Over half the parcels in this area contain units built prior to 1925, with the vast majority of all units built prior to 1950. The area is comprised of a diverse mix of single and multi-family housing, often located adjacent to one another without adequate buffering. Single-family homes comprise one-third of the housing in this area, with nearly half of these homes utilized as rentals. Despite the deteriorated condition of large segments of the housing stock, rents are high, resulting in 58% of renters overpaying for housing, with one-third severely overpaying and spending more than half their incomes on rent. (Citywide, 46% of renters overpay, with 23% severely overpaying).

Residential Real Estate Activity

Review of all residential sales in the Central Focus Area during 2003 reveals 161 completed sales: 84 single-family homes, 2 condominium units, 65 duplex/triplex/fourplex buildings, and 10 apartment buildings.

Table 3
Central Focus Area
Residential Sales Prices – 2003

Unit Type	# Units Sold	Price Range	Median Price	Median Unit Size	Median Year Built
Homebuyer Units					
Single-Family	84	\$108,000-\$315,000	\$215,000	985 sq.ft.	1922
Condominium	2	\$101,000-\$193,000	\$147,000	1,050 sq.ft.	1995
Unit Type	# Buildings Sold	Price Range per Unit	Median Price per Unit	Median Unit Size	Median Year Built
Investment Properties					
Duplex – Fourplex	65	\$62,500-\$225,000	\$121,500	---	1928
Apartments	10	\$37,000-\$121,000	\$63,000	---	1939

Source: Real Quest, January 2003-December 2003

Single-Family Homes: With 84 units sold, the Central Focus Area evidenced strong single-family sales activity in 2003, representing a 5% turnover in the single-family housing stock. One-third of these units had previously sold since 2000, realizing significant price appreciation in a two-three year period. According to local realtors, the demand for single-family homes in this area is high, with a shortage of interested sellers. While home values have increased dramatically, with a median sales value of \$215,000, home values in the Central Focus Area remain well below the \$345,000 average Citywide median⁵. Single-family homes were on average only 985 square feet in size, and less than one-third of these units contained 3 or more bedrooms, a significant need for the large families prevalent in this area. A few single-family homes did evidence recent upgrading, likely indicating owner-occupancy, as well as the results of the City's intensive code enforcement efforts in the Central NIS.

⁵ Source: Dataquick January 2003 - December 2003 residential sales by zip code. Citywide average median sales price calculated as weighted average of median prices for 11 Long Beach zip codes.

Duplex/Triplex/Fourplex Buildings: Similar to the Washington School Focus Area, with 65 duplex/triplex/fourplex buildings sold in 2003, the Central Focus Area is experiencing a high level of investor activity as investors are buying up these smaller properties. Half of these properties had post-2000 prior sales, and realized significant price appreciation of 40 to 100% and above. The purchase price in 2003 ranged from \$62,500-\$225,000 per unit, with a median price of \$121,500. The median year built was 1928.

Condominiums: With only two condominiums sold in this large Focus Area, condos represent a limited segment of the area's housing market. The sales price on these units varied significantly, from a low of \$101,000 to a high of \$193,000. The median year built of these units was 1995, and they were on average 1,050 square feet in size.

Apartments: Discussions with local realtors indicate apartment values have risen dramatically in the Central Focus Area over the past several years. Among the ten apartment buildings that sold in 2003, the median sales price per unit had reached \$63,000, a 35% increase above the \$46,000 per unit median price for the 20 apartments sold in this area in 2001-2002. Half of the ten properties sold in 2003 had sold just two-three years earlier. Apartments are typically in smaller buildings (80% have 8 or fewer units), and predominated by studio and 1-bedroom units. The median year built was 1939, indicative of potential rehabilitation needs based on age alone.

Market Rents

In addition to apartments and duplexes, single-family homes comprise approximately 20% of the rentals in the Central Focus Area, providing a wider range of rental options for families. As illustrated in Table 4, market rents in the mid-section of Long Beach (zip code 90806) average \$923 for a 2-bedroom apartment, \$1,795 for a 3-bedroom condominium, \$930 for a 2-bedroom duplex, and \$1,050 for a 2-bedroom single-family home. Single-family home rents varied dramatically by unit size, with 3-bedroom units commanding an average \$1,430 in rents, reflecting a 35% increase above 2-bedroom rents and indicative of the demand for larger rentals in the area.

Comparison of average rent levels between January 2002 – May 2004 indicate a significant rise in apartment rents, particularly among studios (25% increase) and 3-bedroom units (42% increase). Single-family home rents have also risen dramatically, with rents on 2-bedroom homes rising by 34%.

Table 4
Central Focus Area (Zip Code 90806)
Rental Housing Rates: 2002-2004

Unit Type and Bedroom Size	<u>Jan 2002</u> Average Rent*	<u>May 2004</u> Average Rent*	Change
<i>Apartments</i>			
Studio	\$426	\$533	+25%
1	\$632	\$701	+11%
2	\$782	\$923	+18%
3	\$839	\$1,193	+42%
4	\$1,323	\$1,431	+8%
<i>Condominiums/Townhomes</i>			
3	\$1,545	\$1,795	+16%
<i>Duplex</i>			
2	\$850	\$930	+9%
3	\$1,217	\$1,319	+8%
<i>House</i>			
1	\$774	\$720	-7%
2	\$785	\$1,050	+34%
3	\$1,261	\$1,430	+13%
4	--	\$1,714	--

* Rents reflect average between 1-2 bathroom units
Source: Long Beach Housing Authority, Rent Surveys

Residential Development

During calendar years 2002-2003, no new residential development occurred in the Central Focus Area. The most significant residential development in this area in recent years is Renaissance Walk on Atlantic Avenue. This Redevelopment Agency and LBHDC assisted project provides 40 units of mixed-income single-family detached housing along with an on-site child care facility for 65 children. In addition, three new single-family homes were developed, two of which were affordable ownership units sponsored by Habitat for Humanity.

Neighborhoods within the Central Area are predominately designated R-1 and R-2 zones, with only small pockets of R-3 and R-4 zoning, indicating the City's desire to maintain the predominate low density character of the area. Future residential development opportunities will be focused along the major commercial corridors – Atlantic Avenue and Long Beach Boulevard. Consistent with this effort, future LBHDC sponsored housing in the Central Focus Area includes: Atlantic Avenue housing Phases III and IV (acquisition of 2 blocks across from

Renaissance Walk and adjacent Burnett Library and Elementary School for affordable development), and 58 units of mixed income ownership housing in Phase I and an additional 30-35 units in Phase II to replace dilapidated buildings and vacant lots on Long Beach Boulevard north of Pacific Coast Highway.

The Central Redevelopment Project Area encompasses the western half of the Central Focus Area (west of Atlantic), and continues east along Pacific Coast Highway. The Redevelopment Agency plays an active role in assembling sites for development, and as presented earlier, has developed a draft Strategic Guide for Development to define land use concepts and development strategies for the Central Redevelopment Project Area to facilitate the area's transformation.

Code Enforcement Violations

The City's Code Enforcement Division identified the following active cases in the Central Focus Area as of March 31, 2004:

- Abandoned Vehicles - 24
- Property Maintenance – 72
- Substandard Buildings – 31
- Substandard Conditions – 45
- Weed Abatement – 68
- Zoning Enforcement - 27

Of the 1,899 residentially zoned parcels in the Central Focus Area, 4% have active property maintenance violations. In addition, 2% of the properties have citations for substandard conditions, and 2% have citations for substandard building violations.

Since 1990, ten neighborhoods have been designated Neighborhood Improvement Strategy Areas (NIS) areas by the City Council based upon public safety issues (crime, fire and paramedic responses), social indicators (welfare recipients, household incomes, and absentee ownership), and property conditions (property maintenance/substandard building cases, graffiti, health inspections). The majority of the Central Focus Area falls within the Central NIS (with the exception of the South Wrigley neighborhood west of Long Beach Blvd.), where the City continues to conduct proactive code enforcement efforts. For the past several years, the Central NIS area has had a full time code enforcement officer whose responsibility includes completion of a block based survey to identify and remedy code violations. The high number of active code violations recorded in the Central Focus Area in part reflects the proactive work of the City to identify violations in this area. Factors that contribute to code violations include the large number of absentee landlords, the age of the housing stock, and the high population density in this area.

Police Activity

The Central Focus Area is comprised of 16 police reporting districts, and averaged 64 Part 1⁶ crimes per district in 2003, fairly comparable to the Citywide average of 68 Part 1 crimes per district. From 2002-2003, Part 1 crimes in this area decreased by 8% from 1,115 to 1,027 incidents. While both Part 1 and Part 2 crimes have been declining in the Central Area over the past several years, the area nonetheless continues to experience serious violent crimes. During 2003, seven murders were committed, with five murders in 2002.

LBPD reports that the eastern portion of this Focus Area, and those neighborhoods, which border Signal Hill, have fewer calls for service. The Pacific Coast Highway corridor, which forms the southern edge of the Focus Area, is a highly traveled thoroughfare, with many hotels and commercial establishments. This area experiences significant police activity related to prostitution and traffic-related incidents. The most prevalent Part 1 crimes in the Central Focus Area in 2003 were: auto theft (18%), aggravated assault (18%), robbery (14%), petty theft (13%), and auto burglary (12%).

Adequacy of Park Space

Approximately half of the Central Focus Area falls within the service radius of several parks. The area east of Pasadena and south of Hill are served by Chittick Field, Martin Luther King Jr. Community Park, and California Recreation Center Neighborhood Park. The northwestern corner of this Focus Area is also served by Veterans Community Park. However, the neighborhoods within the Central Focus Area that exhibit the highest population densities (west of Pasadena Avenue) fall entirely outside the service radius for any existing neighborhood, community or regional park. This absence of local open space resources can serve to exacerbate the impacts of significant household overcrowding already present in this area.

⁶ Part 1 crimes encompass crimes against persons and crimes against property. Crimes against persons include: murder, manslaughter, forced rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Crimes against property include: residential, commercial and automobile burglary, grand and petty theft, auto and bike theft, and arson.

3. North Long Beach King School Focus Area

Artesia Freeway – Greenleaf Blvd (North City limits)/ Delta Avenue – Long Beach Freeway

The North Long Beach King School Focus Area lies within the northwestern most corner of the City, isolated from the remainder of City by the 91 and 710 freeways which form the area's southern and eastern boundaries. The City of Compton abuts the area's northern and western borders, with Compton Community College located immediately to the west.

This Focus Area consists of approximately 2,080 dwelling units and is home to 8,235 residents. Unlike the other Focus Areas, single-family homes comprise more than half of the housing in the area, along with over 200 mobile homes concentrated in one large mobile home park. While the area does contain a mix of small-to-large multi-family properties, the overall housing and population density is well below that of the other two predominately multi-family Focus Areas. The age of the housing in this North Long Beach neighborhood is also much more recent than the other two areas, with the majority of the housing stock built post WWII. However, with over 50% renter-occupancy in this area and one-third of the single-family homes used as rentals, this high level of absentee ownership contributes to deterioration of the neighborhood.

North Long Beach Focus Area residents are ethnically diverse: 62% Hispanic, 24% African American, 6% Asian and 4% White. With an average household size of 4.2 persons per unit, and 42% of the population under the age of 18, this area is characterized by a significant number of large families with children. Numerous census blocks in this Focus Area average 5 or more persons per household, among the highest average household size in the City. The modest single-family homes in this Focus Area are typically 2 to 3-bedroom units, and inadequately sized to house the large households prevalent in this area. This is evidenced by 60% of the renter households, which reside in overcrowded conditions, with 37% living in severely overcrowded conditions.

Median household incomes within 3 of the area's 4 census block groups range from \$23,000 to \$33,000, with a median income of \$51,000 in the 4th block group located immediately west of the 710 freeway. Nearly one-third of the population falls below the poverty level. High rental rates in the area relative to incomes result in 56% of renters overpaying for housing, and 30% spending more than half their incomes towards rents.

Residential Real Estate Activity

Review of 2003 residential sales in the North Long Beach King School Focus Area documents 76 completed sales: 56 single-family homes, 19 duplex/triplex/fourplexes, and 1 apartment building.

Table 5
North Long Beach King School Focus Area
Residential Sales Prices – 2003

Unit Type	# Units Sold	Price Range	Median Price	Median Unit Size	Median Year Built
Homebuyer Units					
Single-Family	56	\$173,000-\$315,000	\$235,000	1,088 sq.ft.	1948
Unit Type	# Buildings Sold	Price Range per Unit	Median Price per Unit	Median Unit Size	Median Year Built
Investment Properties					
Duplex – Fourplex	19	\$69,000-\$175,000	\$127,500	---	1950
Apartments	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	---	1955

Source: Real Quest, January 2003-December 2003

Single-Family Homes: With 56 homes sold in this area, this represents a healthy 5% turnover in the single-family housing stock. The majority of units sold were 2-bedroom (37%) and 3-bedroom (55%) units. The median sales price of \$235,000 makes this area still relatively affordable in contrast to the average Citywide median of \$345,000. Among units sold, the average year built was 1948, and the average unit size 1,088 square feet. The average parcel size was 5,750 - significantly larger than single-family parcels in the other two Focus Areas – possibly providing potential for room additions to alleviate overcrowding.

Duplex/Triplex/Fourplex Buildings: A total of 19 duplexes sold in this Focus Area in 2003. With only two of these properties evidencing post-2000 prior sales, property “flipping” by investors is not yet as prevalent as in the other Focus Areas. The median purchase price was \$127,500 per unit, and the median year built 1950.

Apartments: Given the fact that this Focus Area is comprised predominately of single-family units and mobile homes, only one apartment complex sold in this area over the past year. A six-unit building (all 1 bedrooms) built in 1955 sold for \$40,000 per unit. This property previously sold in 2001 for \$30,000 per unit, a 33% increase in value in two years.

Market Rents

Nearly half of the rental housing in this Focus Area is in single-family housing, providing rental options for large families. As depicted in Table 6, May 2004 rents for single-family housing in the North section of Long Beach (zip code 90805) average \$800 for a 1-bedroom home, \$1,123 for a 2-bedroom home, \$1,341 for a 3-bedroom home, and \$1,515 for a 4-bedroom home. Similar to the other two Focus Areas, single-family home rents have risen dramatically over the past two years, increasing 24% and 33% for 1 and 2-bedroom units respectively.

Apartment rents in North Long Beach average \$947 for a 2-bedroom unit and \$1,160 for a 3-bedroom unit, and have risen anywhere from 5%-19% over the past two years, depending on unit size.

Table 6
North Long Beach King School Focus Area (Zip Code 90805)
Rental Housing Rates: 2002-2004

Unit Type and Bedroom Size	<u>Jan 2002</u> Average Rent*	<u>May 2004</u> Average Rent*	Change
<i>Apartments</i>			
Studio	\$490	\$575	+17%
1	\$641	\$707	+10%
2	\$817	\$947	+16%
3	\$1,105	\$1,160	+5%
4	\$1,200	\$1,428	+19%
<i>Condominiums/Townhomes</i>			
2	\$688	\$788	+15%
<i>Duplex</i>			
1	\$553	\$666	+20%
2	\$843	\$905	+7%
3	\$1,088	\$1,112	+2%
<i>House</i>			
1	\$647	\$800	+24%
2	\$842	\$1,123	+33%
3	\$1,182	\$1,341	+13%
4	\$1,398	\$1,515	+8%

* Rents reflect average between 1-2 bathroom units
Source: Long Beach Housing Authority, Rent Surveys

Residential Development

During calendar years 2002-2003, a total of 8 residential building permits were issued in the North Long Beach King School Focus Area. All of these permits were for new single-family home construction, and indicate a modest level of investment occurring in the neighborhood. The predominant zoning in this Focus Area is R-1 single-family, providing for preservation of the area's low density neighborhoods. Multi-family R-3 zoning is limited to locations along Long Beach and Artesia Boulevards.

The North Long Beach Redevelopment Project Area encompasses the entire Focus Area. The North Long Beach Strategic Guide for Redevelopment (2002) identifies strong market opportunities for development of new housing in the greater North Long Beach community. Within the North Long Beach King School Focus Area, the Strategic Guide identifies opportunities for single-family residential development along Long Beach Boulevard, similar to the Renaissance Walk project on Atlantic Avenue.

The Strategic Plan for Redevelopment establishes the following strategies for residential uses in North Long Beach:

- Design principles for pedestrian areas
- Strategies for improving or maintaining the quality of existing residential areas
- Conversion of certain existing commercial corridors to residential uses
- Conversion of mixed commercial and residential minor arterials into consistent residential zones
- Create opportunities for homeownership

Code Enforcement Violations

The City's Code Enforcement Division identified the following active cases in the North Long Beach King School Focus Area as of March 31, 2004:

Abandoned Vehicles - 27
Property Maintenance – 29
Substandard Buildings – 3
Substandard Conditions – 11
Weed Abatement – 37
Zoning Enforcement - 32

With 1,149 residential parcels in this Focus Area, 3% of the properties have active code violations related to inadequate property maintenance, such as broken windows, screens or fences in disrepair, etc. Identified substandard

buildings and conditions are much lower than the other two Focus Areas, with 1% of the properties with active cases. Concentrations of code violations are evidenced in the R-3 and R-2 zoned areas west of Long Beach Boulevard to Gale Avenue, and in the area's 200+ space mobile home park in particular.

Approximately two-thirds of this Focus Area falls within the North Long Beach/King School Neighborhood Improvement Strategy (NIS), which extends from Long Beach Boulevard east to the 710 freeway. The City has conducted focused code enforcement in this area over the past decade to improve overall neighborhood conditions, although this area is not currently considered an "active" NIS so that code enforcement is currently on a complaint basis.

Police Activity

The three police reporting districts that comprise this area averaged 84 Part 1 crimes in 2003, approximately 25% higher than the Citywide average of 68 Part 1 crimes per district. Between 2002-2003, Part 1 crimes increased by 8% (from 235 to 251 incidents), and Part 2 crimes increased by 13% from 200 to 227 incidents. In contrast, Part 1 and Part 2 crimes Citywide each declined by 4% during this same period. The most prevalent Part 1 crimes in the King School neighborhood in 2003 were: auto theft (31%), aggravated assault (16%), and auto burglary (15%). During calendar years 2002 and 2003, four murders were reported in the area.

Both the 91 and 710 freeways intersect this Focus Area and contribute to the relatively high level of criminal activity by providing easy access to and from the area. There are many businesses located along Artesia and Long Beach Boulevards, which serve as a target for crime in the area. Gang members from the area and neighboring cities contribute to the crime problems.

Adequacy of Park Space

The City's Open Space and Recreation Element illustrates that almost the entire North Long Beach King School Focus Area falls outside the service area for any existing neighborhood, community or regional park. The five-acre Coolidge Park is the nearest park, and is both physically and psychologically separated from this neighborhood by the Artesia Freeway. King Elementary School is located within the Focus Area, and if a joint-use agreement were reached between the City and Long Beach Unified School District, could offer 4.6 acres of recreational open space to the neighborhood. While relative population and housing densities in this area are lower than the other two Focus Areas, and the area's predominance of single-family homes offer some amount of outdoor play area, the area is characterized by a majority of large family households with children and significant unit overcrowding, thus generating significant needs for recreational open space.

III. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Persons Contacted

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2. Corinne Swart, Crime Analysis Supervisor, LBPD
3. Dennis Thys, Neighborhood Services Bureau Manager
4. Mark Sutton, Building Inspection Officer
5. Dale Wiersma, Principal Building Inspector
6. Jeff McIntosh, Main Street Realtors

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